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*United States District Court
District of Maine
Office of the Clerk

FILING A COMPLAINT BY A PRISONER
PURSUANT TO THE CIVIL RIGHTS ACT, 42 U.S.C. SECTION 1983

This packet includes two complaint forms and two applications to proceed in forma pauperis. To start an action you must complete a complaint form and file the original (not a copy) with the Clerk of the United States District Court for the District of Maine, 156 Federal Street, Portland, ME 04101 or the Clerk's Office, 202 Harlow Street, Bangor, ME 04401. (See Local Rule 3(b) to determine where to file your complaint. Cases from the Maine State Prison in Warren should be filed in Bangor.) You should keep a copy of the completed complaint for your own records. All copies of the complaint must be identical to the original. The clerk will not file your complaint unless it conforms to these instructions and to these forms.

Your complaint must be legibly handwritten or typewritten. You, the plaintiff, must sign and declare under penalty of perjury that the facts are correct. If you need additional space to answer a question, you may use the reverse side of the form or an additional blank page.

You will note that in the complaint you are required to give facts. THIS COMPLAINT SHOULD NOT CONTAIN LEGAL ARGUMENTS OR CITATIONS.

Generally, your complaint can be brought in this court only if one or more of the named defendants is located within this district, or if the claim arose in this district. Further, you must file a separate complaint for each claim that you have unless they are all related to the same incident or issue.

In order for this complaint to be filed, it must be accompanied by the filing fee of \$350.00.

If you are unable to prepay the filing fee in this action, you may apply to the court to proceed in *forma pauperis*. Two blank applications for this purpose are included in this packet. One copy should be filed with your complaint; the other copy is for your records. The application **must** be accompanied by a certification regarding your inmate account. Failure to include the inmate account certification will result in a delay of your case.

→ See Reverse Side ←

→ The Court will issue an order granting or denying your application to proceed in *forma pauperis* and explaining your repayment responsibilities. Following review by the court, service documents will issue for defendants who remain in the lawsuit. It is your obligation to serve defendants with an exact copy of the complaint in accordance with Rule 4 of the Rules of Civil Procedure, **after** the service documents are issued by the clerk. If you have been granted in *forma pauperis* status the Clerk will notify the defendant(s) and/or the U.S. Marshal regarding the service of process. However, it is still your obligation to furnish the correct name and address of each person you have named in your lawsuit. In any event service must be completed within 120 days from the date the complaint was filed or the case may be dismissed.

See Reverse Side